



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

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## Canada

### Agricultural Situation

### COOL Update Briefing Note

**2008**

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**Report Highlights:**

Briefing note to update Canadian audiences on the status of the U.S. Country of Origin Labeling requirements (COOL).

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Trade Report  
Ottawa [CA1]  
[CA]

**Country of Origin Update – Briefing Note**

- The catalyst for COOL support is China. U.S. consumer concerns over contaminated ingredients in pet foods and the massive product recall(s) has turned attention to product from other countries, not just China, so that public sentiment is moving rapidly toward strengthening laws that require country of origin labels
- Opposition from U.S. food processors, grocery stores and the major meat processors delayed or kept COOL at bay for fresh produce and meat, but heightened consumer pressure seems to have persuaded Congress to support COOL
- Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) was part of the 2002 Farm Bill and directed the Secretary of Agriculture to promulgate regulations requiring U.S. retailers to notify their customers of the country of origin of covered commodities
- Those commodities included the muscle cuts of beef, veal, lamb and pork (and the ground meats of the aforementioned); farm raised fish and shellfish; wild fish and shellfish; perishable agricultural commodities and peanuts
- Only the mandatory fish provisions went into effect as scheduled in April 2005
- The implementation for the meats was delayed twice, however, they are back on track and a revised version of COOL is expected to implement the meat provisions by September 2008
- An updated version of the law is contained in both the House and Senate versions of the farm bill, which passed last year but lingers awaiting conference committee
- The COOL section is widely expected to survive conference tweaking
- The Senate version added “chicken” and that change is also expected to survive